



Healthy Church: **What Is Obedience?**



Obedience

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Noun

Definition: Our faithful response to God's love. This is expressed by our trust and participation in what God is doing. Faithful obedience is empowered by the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit.

Obedience Begins with Love

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, he pointed to love. Love for God and love for neighbor are at the center of our response to him **(Matthew 22:37–39)**.

Obedience is not about rule-keeping or earning God's approval. It flows from relationship. We love because God first loved us, and our obedience becomes an expression of that love.

This means obedience is not something we force. It is something that grows as we come to know God more deeply.

Obedience Is Participation, Not Performance

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From the beginning, God's desire has been for humanity to live in trusting relationship with him. Obedience was never meant to be a burden. It was meant to be participation in God's good purposes.

Through Jesus, we are not called to achieve righteousness on our own. Christ has fulfilled obedience on our behalf, and we are invited to share in his life.

This changes how we see obedience. It is no longer about striving or fear. It is about joining Jesus in what he is already doing.

Why Do We Obey?

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Scripture gives us clear reasons for obedience, all rooted in God's goodness and love:

- Because we love God (**John 14:15**)
- Because obedience leads to life and freedom (**Deuteronomy 30:19–20**)
- Because it reflects our trust in him (**Proverbs 3:5–6**)
- Because it shapes our character (**Romans 12:1–2**)
- Because it points others to God (**Matthew 5:16**)
- Because God is at work in us (**Philippians 2:13**)

Obedience is not about losing freedom. ***It is about living fully*** in the life God has given us.

Empowered by the Trinity 05

We are not left to obey on our own.

- **The Father** calls us into relationship and reveals his will in love.
- **The Son** has perfectly obeyed on our behalf and invites us to share in his life.
- **The Spirit** lives in us, transforming our hearts and empowering us to respond.

Obedience is a work of grace from beginning to end. As we walk with God, the Spirit shapes our desires so that we begin to want what God wants.

This is why obedience becomes joyful. It is no longer external pressure. It is an internal transformation.

What This Looks Like in Everyday Life

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Obedience is lived out in simple, daily ways:

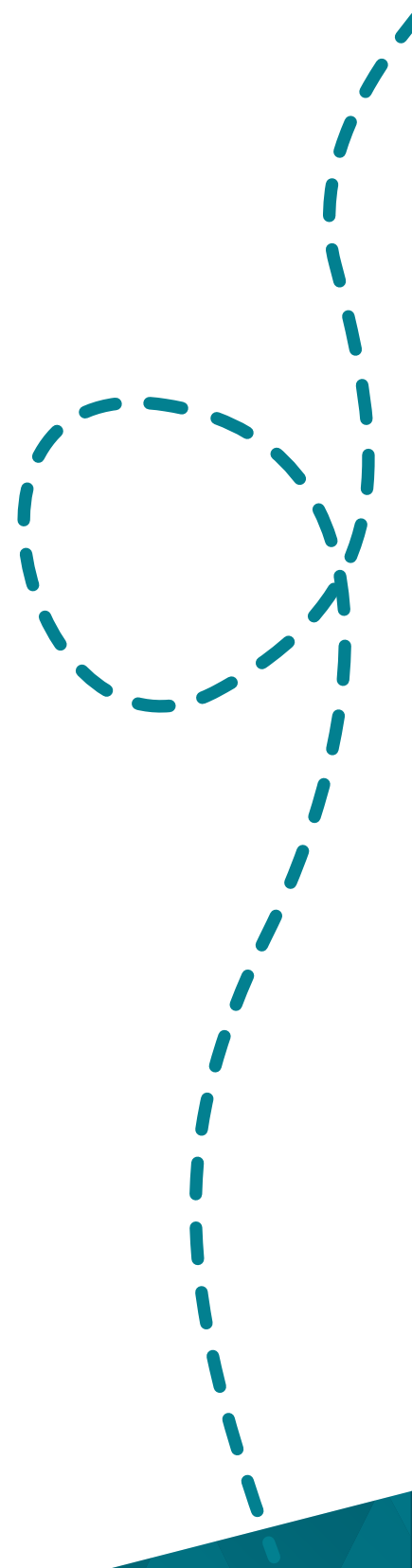
- **Choosing love in our relationships**
- **Acting with honesty and integrity**
- **Serving others with humility**
- **Responding with forgiveness and grace**
- **Trusting God in uncertainty**

These are not small things. They are ways we participate in God's kingdom in the world around us.

As we follow Jesus in these everyday moments, our lives begin to reflect his love more clearly.

Next Steps for Members

- **Reflect:** Where might God be inviting you to trust him more deeply right now?
- **Respond:** Take one small step of obedience this week, not out of pressure, but out of love.
- **Remain:** Stay connected to Jesus through prayer and Scripture. Trust the Spirit to guide and form you.
- **Encourage:** Walk with others. Share what God is teaching you and support one another in following him.



Conclusion

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Obedience is not about earning God's love. It is about responding to it.

Because of Jesus, we are included in the life of the triune God. Because of the Spirit, we are empowered to live in that life.

As we grow in love for God and neighbor, our obedience becomes a reflection of who we already are in Christ.

And together, we become a church that lives out the love of God in the world.

Footnotes

"The Greatest Commandment" – GCI Article

Obedience – GCI Resource

"Six Reasons to Obey God" – GCI Article